

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Environmental Health Services 1950 Ft. Vancouver Way PO Box 9825 Vancouver WA 98666-8825 (360) 397-8215



Clean Stream, Salmon Creek

Dear Homeowner.

As someone who lives by Salmon Creek, you can no doubt vouch for its remarkable natural beauty. The creek is a Clark County gem that residents can take pride in. It offers many opportunities to enjoy solitude. It also provides important habitat for fish and wildlife.

Unfortunately, the creek is polluted. Failing septic systems can contribute to the situation and create health problems for residents. That's why the Clark County Health Department is launching its *Clean Stream, Salmon Creek* program. Funded by a Washington Department of Ecology grant, the program is designed to help improve water quality in Salmon Creek.

During the next two years, we will be contacting 2,000 households within 100 feet of the creek and its tributaries. We will ask homeowners for permission to conduct a visual assessment of their septic systems. Your decision to permit this assessment is voluntary. It's also an important step toward protecting your health and ensuring that Salmon Creek remains a vital asset for people and the wildlife of Clark County.

More than 90% of septic systems along Salmon Creek are in good working condition, so chances are yours is just fine. If it's not functioning properly, state law requires that it be fixed or replaced, We will provide a list of licensed septic designers and installers who can do the work. In some cases, depending on property location, it may be necessary to hook up to the sewer system.

It's important to weigh the potential costs of repairing or replacing a septic system against the value of your personal health, your property value, your neighbors' helath, and the overall health of Salmon Creek.

Should it be necessary to replace or repair your system, financing options are available. Homeowners may also choose to take out home repair loans on their own, taking advantage of historically low rates.

Health Department staff will join with representatives of Clark Water Resources, Hazel Dell Sewer District, Clark County Watershed Stewards, and the Clark Conservation District to to provide information about septic system maintenance, repair/replacement costs and financing options, sewer hookup, livestock management and stream health in general. Contact information for these agencies can be found at www.clark.wa.gov/health/environmental/Salmon_Creek.html.

There's great value in living by a clean creek. We're encouraging you to participate in the *Clean Stream, Salmon Creek* program. You may arrange an inspection by calling us at (360) 397-8154. We look forward to the possibility of working with you to promote the health of Salmon Creek.

Sincerely,

Randy Phillips, Resource Protection Manager Clark County Health Department